



STUDIES

IN
THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS

Past, Present, and Future

A Jubilarian's Reflections on Jesuit Spirituality

WILLIAM A. BARRY, S.J.

THE SEMINAR ON JESUIT SPIRITUALITY

The Seminar is composed of a number of Jesuits appointed from their provinces in the United States.

It concerns itself with topics pertaining to the spiritual doctrine and practice of Jesuits, especially United States Jesuits, and communicates the results to the members of the provinces through its publication, *STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS*. This is done in the spirit of Vatican II's recommendation that religious institutes recapture the original inspiration of their founders and adapt it to the circumstances of modern times. The Seminar welcomes reactions or comments in regard to the material that it publishes.

The Seminar focuses its direct attention on the life and work of the Jesuits of the United States. The issues treated may be common also to Jesuits of other regions, to other priests, religious, and laity, to both men and women. Hence, the journal, while meant especially for American Jesuits, is not exclusively for them. Others who may find it helpful are cordially welcome to make use of it.

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on Jesuit Spirituality*

William A. Barry, S.J.

STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS

32/4 · SEPTEMBER 2000 ·

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Of all things . . .

How would you like to have a shower of rose petals descending on your head from on high? On Pentecost Sunday we celebrate one of the major feasts of the liturgical year, commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit in tongues of fire, as Scripture says, upon the “apostles, together with a group of women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.” At Mass on the most recent Pentecost Sunday in Rome, the fire department stationed a group of its members on the dome of the Pantheon; from their precarious perch they tossed bushel upon bushel of rose petals through the great oculus of that dome. Suggestive of the tongues of fire, the rose petals gently wafted down upon the men and women below until they formed fragrant heaps around the feet of those present. And some even they picked the petals up and tossed them joyfully at one another. Some people become very uptight, even distressed, at what they perceive as the least variation from official norms of liturgical celebration. This is not to slight their concerns; still, this story of a Roman Pentecost practice (nowhere in any official liturgical book) might help toward a more serene attitude when something pastorally appropriate takes place “non contra sed præter” (not against but outside) particular norms.

From rose petals to reading. Summer gives an opportunity for such reading. Here are comments on two of the books that I found especially interesting. Thomas Rausch, S.J., chairman of the Department of Theology at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, has written a new book, *Reconciling Faith and Reason: Apologists, Evangelists, and Theologians in a Divided Church* (The Liturgical Press: Collegeville, Minn.). In about 130 pages he takes up the question of how, even in a divided Church, Catholics can teach and reflect on their faith in a way at once critical, faithful to Catholic tradition, and truly evangelical. The book is eminently fair-minded and therefore will please partisans of neither “Catholic fundamentalism [nor] an academic theology cut off from the life and faith of the Church.” It treats the familiar hot-button questions of a divided Church, contemporary Catholic theology, the new apologists, Scripture and Tradition and Church, sexual morality, the Eucharist and liturgy, and the new evangelization—all in search of a common ground in theology—and it does so quietly, lucidly, and competently.

Not at all quietly, Garry Wills in *Papal Sin* (New York: Doubleday) deals with what the book’s subtitle calls “structures of deceit” in the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries of the Catholic Church. The operative word is “structures.” Just as in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there were in the Church structures that encouraged avarice among popes, and in those and the next centuries structures that encouraged earthly political power, and in the same centuries structures that made papal nepotism almost inevitable, so, according to Wills, there are today structures that make deceit all too easy and widespread. A reader may find the book in places strident (I do) and may not always agree with its strictures (I don’t); but Wills has a lot of serious concerns to write about. The twenty-one chapters of

the book are divided into four sections entitled "Historical Dishonesties," "Doctrinal Dishonesties," "The Honesty Issue," and "The Splendor of Truth." Wills maintained that the problem is not "as clear-cut and direct as simple lying. That is why I speak of the 'structures of deceit.' . . . There are many people who take on themselves the duty of maintaining in good repair [such] structures," and all of this "for the good of the church."

Apart from the text itself, three circumstances ought to give pause to Church officials. First, this is not Catholic bashing by a disgruntled insider or by a querulous outsider. This is a *cri du coeur*, a cry from the heart by a convinced, practicing Catholic happy to identify himself as such, an intelligent and invariably thoughtful scholar and author. He ought to be taken seriously, even when we may vigorously disagree on particular points or emphases. Second, the book has been for more than two months on the *New York Times*' best-seller list. Books of this type do not usually produce such sales. Those sales will be dismissed by some as a phenomenon of the "chattering class," people interested in buying any book that retails a new controversy in the Church. But that dismissal would be wrong, at least taking into account this piece of anecdotal evidence, my third circumstance.

I have come across too many Catholics, plain, ordinary, simple, solid, middle-of-the-road, church-going Catholics, who, on reading the book, have said something like "Yes, that's it! That's what I feel about a lot of the activities that I see going on in the Church." One may agree or disagree with that perception, but if it is out there, shared but unarticulated by good Catholics until they read and find themselves in agreement with a certain book, then that book ought to be taken seriously. Whether it will be by the people who most ought to do so is an open question.

As the last item for this issue of STUDIES, may I introduce the new members of the Seminar of Jesuit Spirituality. They are James Keenan, S.J., who teaches moral theology at Weston Jesuit School of Theology; Douglas Marcouiller, S.J., who teaches economics at Boston College; Thomas O'Malley, S.J., who is associate dean of arts and sciences and teaches in the honors program at Boston College; and William Rehg, S.J., who teaches philosophy at Saint Louis University. My thanks to them for accepting membership on the seminar for a three-year term involving frequent meetings and papers to be submitted as possible essays for STUDIES. They are a generous group to take on those responsibilities.

John W. Padberg, S.J.
Editor

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PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

A Jubilarian's Reflections on Jesuit Spirituality

Introduction

In *Stone Song: A Novel of the Life of Crazy Horse*, Win Blevins describes in poignant detail the terrible dilemma of the Lakota leader Crazy Horse as he and his people face the coming of the white people and the inevitable end of their Indian culture. The Lakota could foresee the end of an age, the age of the buffalo and of their way of life as a nomadic people dependent upon the buffalo for their livelihood. Just before he decided to enter the reservation for the sake of the people, he and another brave spoke with a seer named Horn Chips. Horn Chips ruminated on the way times change.

"Big changes come sometimes," he said. . . . "Not every seven generations, but seven times seven or a hundred times seven, changes come that are too great to foresee, far too great to understand."

He looked at them somberly. "I believe this one of the teachings of the Inyan [Spirits]: When the old ways are dead," he said, "it means that a new way is upon us. We cannot discern it yet, but it is at hand." . . . He looked directly at Crazy Horse. "The old way is beautiful. We turn backward to it and in taking leave we offer it our love. Then we turn forward and walk forth blindly, offering our love. Yes, blindly."¹

¹ Win Blevins, *Stone Song: A Novel of the Life of Crazy Horse* (New York: Tom Doherty Associates, 1995), 320f.

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Thus did Horn Chips counsel Crazy Horse to face the terrible changes ahead.

As I reflect on fifty years in the Society of Jesus, I sense that we have experienced the kind of “big change” Horn Chips described. In these fifty years the cultures and worldviews that made sense of our world collapsed around us, and we are still groping to find the new way. In this essay I want to help us turn backward to the old way, take leave of it while offering it our love, and then look forward with hope and love, trusting that the new way will be revealed to us in time.

The Meaning of Culture

Of the many definitions in Webster’s *New International Dictionary*, the following best fits the theme of this paper: “The complex of distinctive attainments, beliefs, traditions, etc., constituting the background of a racial, religious, or social group.”² Culture in this sense is the way a particular group of people make sense of their world; it provides what N. T. Wright calls a worldview.³ A worldview answers the basic questions of existence for those who share in it: Who are we? Where are we? What’s the problem? What’s the solution? What time is it? A worldview is the lens through which we comprehend our world. Like the lenses many of us use to enhance our eyesight, a worldview is taken for granted and operates without our awareness unless something happens that causes us to reflect on it. In the United States, for example, we imbibed a worldview after World War II that could be expressed in this way: Who are we? We are a God-blessed, freedom-loving, democratic people. Where are we? We are in the land of the free, a land of opportunity. What’s wrong? There are enemies without and within; namely, the Soviet Union and worldwide Commu-

² Clifford Geertz defines culture as “an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life” (*The Interpretation of Cultures* [New York: Basic Books, 1973], 89). Robert N. Bellah and his collaborators have a similar definition: “Those patterns of meaning that any group or society uses to interpret and evaluate itself and its situation. . . . We take culture to be a constitutive dimension of all human action. It is not an epiphenomenon to be explained by economic or political factors” (*Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* [New York: “Perennial Library,” Harper & Row, 1986], 333).

³ N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 122ff.

nism, who are bent on our destruction and the conquest of the world. What's the solution? We must defeat them and thwart them at every turn. What time is it? The time of great trial for all free peoples. A cultural worldview is inculcated in every member of the group by formal and informal education, as well as by formation and, increasingly, the mass media. One can see why John Staudenmaier says of himself, "I am a late-twentieth-century capitalist."⁴ But, of course, he could have added many more identities; such as, "I am a late-twentieth-century American Roman Catholic," "American Jesuit priest," "academician," and so on. In addition, because of his age he could also have said of himself, as I can say of myself, "I am a Roman Catholic formed by the pre-Vatican II culture and reformed, insofar as this is possible, by the post-Vatican II culture."

For the most part, the influence of a culture and its worldview on us escapes our consciousness. We have so imbibed our culture or cultures that we are unaware of how they condition our behavior. Let me offer one example: A few years ago I spent three weeks in Ireland and took a good many walks. In the course of those jaunts, every time I had to cross a street I first looked left and started across if I saw no traffic; only then would I look right to see if any traffic was coming from the other way. In the United States this ingrained way of proceeding is not only second nature but also self-protective. In Ireland it was downright dangerous, because the pattern of traffic is just the opposite of ours. So I learned that I was unconsciously conditioned to a pattern of traffic by growing up in the United States. Similarly, when I drove a car in Ireland, I periodically experienced anxiety, for I instinctively felt that I was on the wrong side of the road. Attempts to change the unconscious way we do things lead to anxiety. So it should not surprise us that culture influences our image of God.

I was born in Worcester, Mass., in 1930 and entered the Society of Jesus in 1950. Like most of my Catholic contemporaries, I grew up in a Catholic subculture of the overarching culture of the United States. My parents were immigrants from Ireland who married in 1929, just after the beginning of the great depression. In my neighborhood most of the families were headed by immigrants or sons and daughters of immigrants of various nationalities. There were some Protestants in our neighborhood, but not

⁴ John M. Staudenmaier, S.J., "To Fall in Love with the World: Individualism and Self-Transcendence in American Life," *STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS* 26, no. 3 (May 1994). He makes the point that culture inheres so deeply in us that it is only with difficulty that we can be believers. "Culture lies too deeply embedded in human beings to ever become completely baptized, and the life of faith in every era takes the form of a holy tension between primordial cultural tendencies and God's endlessly affectionate challenge to learn to live faithfully" (2).

many. Life revolved around our parish church, where I served as an altar boy and sang in the choir. I went to our parish grammar school staffed by the Sisters of Mercy, and then attended a relatively small high school for boys staffed by the Xaverian Brothers. After high school I entered a somewhat larger world, the College of the Holy Cross, taught by the Jesuits; but it was still in Worcester and still part of the Catholic subculture of the United States. When I entered the Jesuits after two years of college, I entered another strong subculture, that of the Society of Jesus. Until the 1960s I was immersed in these cultures, whose ways were unquestioned. In a manner of speaking, they were like the air I breathed. Just as I did not question the air, so too I did not question the cultures in which I grew up. I was an American and a Catholic, and later a Jesuit, and proud of it.

I have been shaped, as have all U. S. Jesuits who are over fifty years of age, by the larger culture of the United States in the twentieth century (a century that has been called the "American century"), by the Catholic subculture in which we grew up, and, finally, by the Jesuit subculture within both. These cultures conditioned our understanding of our world, the way we perceived our world and the way we acted in it. They also conditioned the way we related to God, that is to say, our spirituality. The larger culture and these subcultures have undergone profound, even seismic, changes in my lifetime, changes that have shaken all of us. The United States, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Society of Jesus have radically changed. I believe that we do not yet see clearly what these three entities will become in the new age that is being born.

Jesuit Spirituality: A Tensive Spirituality

Jesuit spirituality can be said to embody a set of creative tensions. Jesuits are to be men of prayer for whom spiritual means are primary, yet they are asked to use all the natural means at their disposal for their apostolic work. Jesuits are to be men "crucified to the world," yet actively engaged in the world; they are, indeed, expected to find God in the world and in all things. Jesuits are to be distinguished by their poverty, yet able to carry out their apostolic activities among the wealthy as well as among the poor. Jesuits are to be chaste and to be known as chaste, but are expected to be at home on the road, outside the cloister, that is. Jesuits are to be men of passion, intelligence, initiative, and creativity, yet obedient to superiors. Jesuits are to be men who believe that God communicates directly with individuals, including themselves, and thus should be discerning as regards the movements of their hearts; yet they are also to be men distinguished by

disciplined obedience and fidelity to the hierarchical Church. In Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises* itself the tension is evident:⁵ the fifteenth preliminary observation (no. 15), with its premise that God communicates to individuals, exists in tension with the "Rules for Thinking with the Church" (nos. 352ff.). In addition, the book contains a structured set of exercises, yet these exercises are to be adapted to the needs and talents of the individual. The tension in Ignatian spirituality comes to the fore when Jesuits debate the purpose of the Exercises: Is it union with God or finding the will of God in one's life? This dispute sets in clear relief the tension at the heart of Jesuit spirituality.⁶

Jesuit spirituality functions best when these tensions are alive and clearly felt, that is, when Jesuits experience in themselves the influence of each polarity. Jesuits are at their best, for example, when they are attracted to spending much time in prayer but have to rein in that attraction for the sake of their apostolic activity, or when Jesuit theologians experience the tension of being faithful Roman Catholics while searching for new ways to express the truths of faith in a different culture. Because of these creative tensions, Jesuit spirituality has been caricatured in the past and is being caricatured at the present time. Ignatius himself, for example, was accused of being influenced by the "alumbrados" (the "enlightened ones") because the *Spiritual Exercises* presumed that God communicates with individuals. More recently in our history, Jesuit spirituality has been caricatured as rationalistic and coldly ascetical. Not only have outsiders caricatured Jesuit spirituality, but it has actually seemed to offer grounds for these caricatures. In Ignatius's own time, some of the more prominent Jesuits of Portugal wanted to imitate monks and devote long hours each day to solitary prayer, but they succeeded only in evoking strong reprimands from Ignatius. In our history there have been Jesuits who became so immersed in the world that they seemed to have lost their religious underpinnings and to

Jesuit spirituality can be said to embody a set of creative tensions.

⁵ See, for example, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*, ed. and trans. George E. Ganss, S.J. (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992). Text citations refer to the bold-faced marginal numbers in most modern editions of the *Exercises*.

⁶ For a discussion of these tensions see Joseph de Guibert, *The Jesuits: Their Spiritual Doctrine and Practice: A Historical Study* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1964; St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1972). John W. O'Malley also describes a similar series of polarities or tensions in *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 369f.

be indistinguishable from their worldly counterparts.⁷ I believe that during my early days in the Society we failed to experience some of these tensions of Jesuit spirituality, with some predictable results when our cultural foundations crumbled.

The Jesuit Subculture in My First Fifteen Years as a Jesuit

Some description of the Jesuit subculture of my formation years may be helpful at this point. After high school I had, through an almost accidental sequence of events, enrolled at the College of the Holy Cross, where I met some of the best teachers of my life, men who made a deep impression on me. At the end of my sophomore year, I decided to apply to enter the Society, a last-minute decision made when a classmate and good friend told me that he had applied. Why did I enter the Society of Jesus in 1950? No one, of course, can understand all his motivations, but let me at least try to paint the picture as best I can reconstruct it. I was the product of a Catholic culture that idealized the vocation to the priesthood and religious life. Most families felt honored to have one of their members enter the seminary or religious life. No doubt, this cultural bias had an influence on me. In addition, I had long sensed a hunger for God that led me to visit the parish church for prayer and for daily Mass, to read lives of saints and religious novels, and to serve Mass. Thomas Merton's *The Seven Storey Mountain* made a strong impression on me during the summer of 1949. Here was a very intelligent convert who had fallen in love with God and had embraced the religious life. The Jesuits at the College of the Holy Cross were very attractive because of their learning, the evident holiness of some of them, and their desire to help their students develop their minds and their hearts. I remember a feeling of peace and tranquility one lovely summer evening as I saw a several Jesuits walking through the campus saying their breviaries. The Jesuits also seemed to be men who knew who they were and where they were going. They exuded an aura of intelligence, culture, success, and purpose. I presume, too, that there was the attraction of upward mobility for a young man from the working class who had grown up during the depression years of the 1930s. One thing is clear: I was entering a group of winners, men with a robust, masculine spirituality that was very attractive.

⁷ See de Guibert, *Jesuits*, 167ff., for instances of these caricatures.

Thirty other young men entered with me that summer, most of them right out of high school; but some of us had attended college or were veterans of World War II. Most of these men had studied at Jesuit high schools or colleges. They were, like my Holy Cross classmates, intelligent, idealistic, and ambitious—in other words, an attractive group of men. We were introduced into a rather regimented life in a large old mansion, “Shadowbrook,” made to house close to 130 Jesuits—about 65 novices, 50 scholastics studying classics, and the priests and brothers who staffed the house. When we take into account that there were seven or so other novitiates in the United States, all of them bursting with new recruits, we have a measure of how attractive the Society of Jesus was in those days.

A Total Institution

How would I describe this Jesuit subculture? It was all-encompassing and had the characteristics of what Erving Goffman later called a “total institution.”⁸ Shadowbrook was, like most novitiates in the Society at the time, located far from a large city. Indeed, most of the houses of formation in the Society in those years before the Second Vatican Council were located in rural areas. We wore uniform clothes most of each day, called each other by our formal title (Brother Barry), and had our day organized down to the hour and the minute. In the novitiate, incoming and outgoing mail was censored, and no newspapers or radio programs were allowed. Indeed, even Jesuit visitors were restricted to those invited by the novice master. There was almost no privacy; we slept in a large dormitory and prayed, studied, and read in large common rooms. During our first year, our only forays into the “world” were for doctor’s appointments or to teach catechism at a local parish. In second year we spent one month living in groups of three at Boston City Hospital working as orderlies. Thus we were almost totally insulated from the world around us. In later periods of formation, the isolation from the outside world was less total, but we lived, studied, worked, and played in institutions that were socially and culturally isolated. These institutions immersed us in the Jesuit subculture. In this subculture we learned that we were not *of* the world; but we did not experience the other side of the tension mentioned earlier, namely, that we were to be immersed *in* the world.

⁸ Erving Goffman, *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1961).

The Spiritual Exercises

We learned about the Jesuit spiritual tradition through lectures by the novice master, through regular spiritual reading, and through making the Spiritual Exercises as a group, in October of our first year. Each day of this thirty-day retreat, except for three "break days," the novice master gave four or five talks, providing us with "points" for the meditation or contemplation that was to follow. (I used to hope that he would talk a long time, so that the time for personal prayer would be shorter.) We saw the novice master once a week or so for an individual conference. I have no recollection of what happened during those conversations, except that I was relieved when I left the room, much as I was relieved when confession was over. I also recall wondering whether I would ever be able to do "Ignatian" prayer, since I could not create scenes in my imagination, such as seemed to be required by the "composition of place."

I recall having moments of great longing and love for God in the woods around Shadowbrook, moments that reminded me of similar times before I entered the novitiate. But, as far as I could tell, it was not expected that I would bring up such moments and discuss their meaning with the novice master, let alone with anyone else. As a product of the larger culture of American individualism and of an Irish subculture that did not encourage talk about one's inner states, I was also conditioned not to speak of such inner experiences; and I do not recall ever wishing that I could do so. So I fit harmoniously into what I felt was the custom in the Jesuit life, namely, that one did not speak of personal inner experiences with anyone. Mind you, the novice master, who was the only spiritual director for all the novices, would have found it impossible to delve meaningfully into the spiritual experiences of sixty or more young men, even if he had wanted to.⁹

Each novice was expected to make an "election" during the Second Week of the Spiritual Exercises. This "election," however, was not about the choice of a way of life, but rather about the reform of one's life. During our yearly eight-day retreat thereafter, we were also expected to make such an "election." In my case, I am afraid, these "elections" often reeked of triviality. For example, I believe that I once "elected" to wash toilet bowls because I thought I needed to become more humble. The "discernment of spirits" for

⁹ The isolation of Jesuits from one another's inner experience showed itself as late as 1972, when William J. Connolly and I directed a two-summer tertianship program for the first time. We asked the group of tertians to converse with one another about their image and experience of Jesus. They said that it was the first time they had ever spoken of Jesus with another Jesuit.

such “elections” consisted of making a list of pros and cons, Ignatius’s third way of making an election.

Thus were we introduced to the experience that is considered the foundation of the spirituality of the Society of Jesus. There was neither time nor opportunity for adaptation of the Exercises to the individual. If we had any questions, we kept them to ourselves—at least, I did. Once again, one of the tensions characteristic of Jesuit spirituality was not encountered. We experienced the disciplined program of the Exercises, to be sure, but not its adaptation to the needs and talents of the individual. In addition, we had no opportunity to discuss our personal experiences in prayer with a director, or afterwards to converse with one another about our experiences. Thus, we had no lived experience of the discernment of spirits, another hallmark of Jesuit spirituality. Moreover, for years after the novitiate, we went through the four weeks of the Exercises in our annual eight-day retreat under a director who gave four or five talks to large groups of scholastics. We had no idea that the original intent of Ignatius was to direct individuals through the full Exercises, adapting them to the individual’s temperament and present state of soul.

Some men who grew up under this regime have told me that they came to hate prayer as a result and dropped private prayer for a time when free to do so. I did not do so. Why? Perhaps it was a dogged devotion to duty, but I choose also to believe that I was enticed to continue by the occasional times of wonder, longing, and warmth that would overtake me when I engaged in prayer. I suspect that I am not alone in this experience.

Spiritual Reading

Spiritual reading was another method of imbibing the Jesuit way of proceeding. In the novitiate, for four days a week we devoted one period of a half hour to reading the three-volume spiritual classic by Alphonsus Rodriguez, S.J., written at the beginning of the seventeenth century, just forty years after the death of Ignatius, as a way to instruct novices in the Jesuit way of life.¹⁰ It had been used, apparently, ever since in every Jesuit novitiate in the world.¹¹ Most of the examples—and the volumes are filled

¹⁰ Alphonsus Rodriguez, *Practice of Perfection and Christian Virtues*, trans. Joseph Rickaby, 3 vols. (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1929).

¹¹ This is a measure of the uniformity of the Jesuit subculture. Indeed, when I went to Germany for philosophy in 1953, I discovered that the Jesuits from Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Great Britain, Ireland, and Japan had passed through novitiates that differed very little from mine.

with them—are from the monks of the desert or from the chronicles of St. Francis of Assisi. Prayer is described in somewhat utilitarian terms, that is, as a way to save oneself from dangers and temptations and to get favors from God; it is, as Rodriguez notes, a way “to attune and put in order our whole life” (1:285). He writes that there are two sorts of prayer, “one common and easy, the other very special, extraordinary and advanced, something received rather than made” (1:289). He then writes at length about the latter and how it cannot be taught. We were given the message that this kind of prayer was not for the likes of us. Finally, when he gets to ordinary prayer, he describes the prayer of the three powers of the soul, the prayer presented as meditation by Ignatius in the first week of the Exercises. Thus we were given the impression that Ignatian prayer was limited to this method of meditation.

Rodriguez’s teaching on prayer was reinforced by other books on this subject that became our staple spiritual reading. One of them was Edward Leen’s *Progress through Mental Prayer*.¹² Leen, an Irish member of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, wrote a number of books that we read as novices. His *Progress* gives hints that the end of prayer is a love relationship with God, but the stronger message is the utilitarian end of prayer. For

example, he writes, “The real end of prayer therefore is to be good, to effect in ourselves the dispositions to sanctification, that is, to purify our souls and replace our natural views by the views of Jesus Christ and to substitute for our natural life, His mode of life” (64). Leen is less sanguine than Rodriguez about the ease of this type of prayer. He makes it very clear that prayer is not natural to us and that we

have to fight hard against our human nature in order to reach the state where God becomes attractive. “Spirituality has no attraction to nature; on the contrary nature is repelled by it” (72). Novices in the spiritual life “come to Jesus with a natural outlook, independent, passionate, sensual, proud, uncharitable,” lovers “of ease and self-satisfaction”; and they are unaware of their reality (66). Leen’s book reinforced Rodriguez’s admonitions about the need for mortification of our natural inclinations and of continuous disciplined watchfulness against our natural tendencies toward sloth and neglect of prayer. In the books we read in the novitiate, prayer was presented as necessary for our religious life, but hard work. I cannot recall any indication

*The lives of Jesuit saints
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tolic activity.*

¹² Edward Leen, *Progress through Mental Prayer* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1940).

that my heart might, at its deepest level, desire God and that prayer might be the answer to my deepest longing. As a result, I did not think of prayer in terms of a relationship.

For fifteen minutes each day in the novitiate, we also read Thomas à Kempis's *The Following of Christ*.¹³ This spiritual classic, so beloved by Ignatius, speaks eloquently at times of the love of God. For example, in chapter 5 of book 3, Thomas prays movingly to God in this fashion: "O Lord, God, my holy Lover, when Thou shalt come into my heart, all that is within me shall be filled with joy. Thou art my glory and the exultation of my heart. Thou art my hope and my refuge in the day of my tribulation" (179). Moreover, the book contains wisdom for the ages about how to comport oneself as a follower of Christ. But, like much of the spiritual reading of the novitiate, it is written from a monastic perspective, nowhere more clearly shown than in the lines "The cell continually dwelt in groweth sweet," which we memorized in its Latin original, "Cella continuata dulcescit" (70). The monastic predilection of our novitiate also showed itself in the way we gravitated toward the books of Abbot Marmion, such as *Christ the Life of the Soul* and *Christ the Ideal of the Monk*.

Of course, we also read the lives of Jesuit saints. These gave us examples of men who found God in apostolic activity. But the lived experience of Jesuit spirituality told us that a healthy spiritual life needed much silence, time alone, and space. The very setting of our houses of formation told us that God was most easily found apart from the hustle and bustle of the city. Moreover, the separation from our families and friends and former way of life, from any news and any contact with the outside world, was complete, suggesting that the Jesuit way of life required total separation from the surrounding culture. Our spiritual reading reinforced this impression. We were trained as monks for the Jesuit way of life. Not that we were not told about the Jesuit ideal of finding God in all things—we were. But the whole way of life in the novitiate, and even in later formation, communicated a somewhat different ideal, and it was monastic.

In the Constitutions Ignatius makes it quite clear that Jesuit superiors should be men whom their subjects can love.

¹³ Thomas à Kempis, *The Following of Christ*, ed. J. M. Lelen (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1941).

Obedience

Another aspect of the Jesuit subculture also spoke volumes to us about the Jesuit way of proceeding. Obedience to the least sign of the superior's will was emphasized. Moreover, it was made clear that obedience was required no matter how arbitrary the command might seem. For example, we read in Rodriguez how Augustine described the disobedience of Adam and Eve. "So St. Augustine says that nothing could better show the great evil of disobedience than the sight of the evil that came upon man by the mere eating, against the commandment of God, of a thing that had no harm in it, and could have done harm to nobody, but for the eating of it being forbidden."¹⁴ In other words, God's commandment was arbitrary; its only purpose was to show that he was master. Our obedience was to show itself in our obedience to superiors, of course, but also to the cook, to those who were put in charge of the jobs to which we were assigned, to the manuductor, the second-year novice who controlled much of our daily lives. The day was broken up into relatively small segments marked off from one another by the bell of the manuductor. This order of the day aimed to teach us to obey instantly, leaving what we were doing, no matter how important we thought it or how much we liked it, at the sound of the bell. Of course, we were taught about the possibility of representation to a superior if we had reason to question an order, but this teaching did not have much practical effect on our lives. Once again, the tension inherent in Jesuit spirituality, here between individual discernment and obedience, was not experienced; for us the accent was laid on blind obedience.

We were also taught about the account of conscience, but we did not see it in practice. We were expected to make an account of conscience to the novice master and afterwards our rector at least twice a year and to the provincial once a year. With the novice master and rector, the account of conscience often took the form of confessing one's faults and failings. I do not recall any conversation about my interior life, that is, about my inner experiences and how they might relate to present or future apostolic activity. The account of conscience with the provincial was a short meeting in which we asked for our general permissions. I do not recall any meaningful conversation with a provincial about my inner life or about my own hopes and dreams for my apostolic life in my early years in the Society. Mind you, even if the provincial had wanted to engage in such conversations, he would not have had the time. The provincial of New England had over a thousand

¹⁴ Rodriguez, *Practice of Perfection*, 3:275.

men under his jurisdiction.¹⁵ Thus, obedience seemed to be a one-way street: orders came from superiors without any discussion with the subject. That this was the Jesuit way of proceeding became amply illustrated when each year the "status" was put on the bulletin board and men found out their assignment for the following year, most often without any prior discussion with the provincial. Our training in obedience led us to accept the "status" and the "account of conscience" just described as the Jesuit way of proceeding.

In the Constitutions Ignatius makes it quite clear that Jesuit superiors should be men whom their subjects can love. They are, certainly, to be firm in their decisions and to expect obedience, but they are to act with love. For example, we read this description of the novice master:

It will be beneficial to have a faithful and competent person to instruct and teach the novices how to conduct themselves inwardly and outwardly, to encourage them to this, to remind them of it, and to give them loving admonition: a person whom all those who are in probation may love and to whom they may have recourse in their temptations and open themselves with confidence, hoping to receive from him in our Lord counsel and aid in everything.¹⁶

Later in the same part, Ignatius writes of the manner of giving admonitions: "[T]hose who fall into a fault ought to be admonished the first time with love and with gentleness, the second time with love and in such a way that they feel abashed and ashamed, the third time with love and the instilling of fear" (no. 270). In other parts of the Constitutions, it is made clear that love should be at the heart of the relationship between superior and subject in the Society.¹⁷

What was our experience? As I look back on my novice master now, I realize that he had a very difficult job. He had to mold young men of intelligence, ambition, and immaturity into Jesuits, and he had to do it almost single-handedly. And there were over sixty of us all the time. At the time, my predominant emotions toward him—and, I believe, most of my

¹⁵ In fact, when, in the 1970s, the account of conscience began to be practiced more in line with the expectations of the Constitutions, the provincials of the larger provinces asked Father General to appoint vice-provincials, because the task was impossible for one man.

¹⁶ See, for example, *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996), Part III, no. 263 (p. 118).

¹⁷ For example, see *Constitutions* no. 667 (p. 324): "[I]t will further help if] the superior on his part employs all possible love, modesty, and charity in our Lord so that the subjects may be disposed always to have greater love than fear for their superiors."

peers shared these reactions—were fear, reverence, and admiration. He was an austere man who exemplified the mortified man we were supposed to be. Just one trivial example: One day, during the daily conference, a fly landed on his brow and began to walk around his face. He seemed not to notice it and kept on with his lecture. We, of course, did notice it and believed that he had just prescinded from its presence, a sign of his mortification. We heard stories, almost as soon as we entered, of how he had dismissed men from the novitiate overnight, and during our novitiate men were dismissed. Worse yet, because of the secrecy surrounding departures, we never knew for sure why someone had been dismissed. The master had a strong temper, again held in check, we believed, by his strong will. But we knew it was there. He was a man to be feared.¹⁸ In my early years in the Society, superiors, by and large, were much more feared than loved. As a result, we would have found it difficult to speak openly with them about our inner lives, especially about any inner turmoil we might have been experiencing. Thus the openness between subject and superior that should characterize the relationship was compromised. I did not learn to entrust the inner movements of my heart to my superiors. Given my upbringing in an Irish family where talk about feelings was almost unheard of, I was right at home.

Relationships

Close personal relationships with one or a few other novices were discouraged. We were expected to be “friends” with everyone. “Particular friendships” were frowned on. Touching, even in games, was forbidden. Men who became too friendly with one another would be reprimanded and sometimes “put on grades” with one another; that is, they could not speak with one another alone for a period of time. Of course, attractions developed, but one learned to be careful about showing too much desire to be with one man or with a small group. Our formation thus encouraged in us the same kind of rugged individualism, at least for males, fostered by the culture of the United States and by my Irish subculture. The quality of

¹⁸ My novice master’s successor is described by one of his novices, who later left the Society, in a rather chilling account of one experience of “the quietest, most frightening tirade I ever heard” (Paul Linnehan, “Shadowbrook: Tracking God’s Will in a Jesuit Seminary,” *The Gettysburg Review* 11, no. 2 [1998]: 255). It is, by the way, instructive that the novitiate structure he describes sounds exactly like mine, although he entered fourteen years later under a different novice master and in a brand-new building that had been built after the old Shadowbrook had burned to the ground. The structure remained no matter who the master or what the environment might be. Only details differed.

openness with one's companions that seems to have characterized the early Jesuits was not, as a result, a part of our training as Jesuits.

Summary

Our life in the novitiate and thereafter was regimented, but I did not mind it. I took it as the way things had to be, the way Jesuit life was lived, the way that would make me like the men at the College of the Holy Cross whom I had admired. For the most part, we enjoyed one another's company: we shared good meals, some hard-fought games of football, baseball, and basketball; and, at times, we engaged in stimulating conversations. In some ways, the life was easier than my days in high school and college, when I was also working long hours in a fruit-and-vegetable store. We accepted this life as the Jesuit way of proceeding. Moreover, we had witnessed tangible signs that this way of life produced results—our teachers in Jesuit high schools and colleges and the quality of the schools themselves. In addition, we had examples in our midst of mature fellow novices, some of whom had been in the armed services, who shared our way of life and seemed to find it meaningful and challenging. Nothing in our experience would lead us to believe that this way of life was not worthy of our best efforts. Of course, we took some of the regimentation with a grain of salt, but the grain of salt never led us to question the soundness of the whole enterprise. In addition, each year another class of thirty or more new men joined our ranks. The Jesuits had to be doing something right. This was an enterprise worth devoting our lives to.

If we cannot love our past, we cannot accept and love ourselves and our present, because we are products of that past with all its good and bad elements.

Nor should we forget that the Jesuits who made such significant contributions to the Church in the United States and in the world and to the Society in the past century were molded in this subculture. The formation I have described produced those men who had exerted such an impact on the Second Vatican Council, who helped the Church in the United States face its racism, who transformed the teaching of theology not only in our seminaries but also in our schools for the laity, who revolutionized our understanding and practice of giving the Spiritual Exercises. Jesuit spirituality was alive during these years. Moreover, the recovery of the tensions of our spirituality has been achieved through the efforts of Jesuits who were formed as I was. As we face the changes in our subculture, we must not underesti-

mate that subculture. As Horn Chips advises, we must take leave of it with love. Moreover, our past is worthy of such love. It has made us who we are. If we cannot love our past, we cannot accept and love ourselves and our present, because we are products of that past with all its good and bad elements. My purpose in this description has been, not to denigrate the past, but to help all of us to recognize who we are and how we came to be who we are.

At any rate, it was within this subculture that I became a Jesuit. Within this worldview I grew to know who I was and how I should comport myself. This worldview taught us the answers to the basic questions of life. Who are we? We are American Roman Catholics, followers of the true religion; and within that identity, we are members of the Society of Jesus, the elite religious order of the Roman Catholic Church. Where are we? We are in the land of the free, blessed with freedom of religion as well as political freedom. What's the problem? The world does not yet acknowledge the truth of Jesus Christ. What's the solution? We must preach Jesus Christ throughout the world and convert all to the one true Church. What time is it? The time between the first coming of Jesus and his second coming.

The Experiences of the Sixties

Beginning in the 1960s, the cultures that formed our identities as citizens of the United States, members of the Roman Catholic Church, and Jesuits began to break down. The seeds of this disintegration were, no doubt, sown much earlier.¹⁹ Certainly, by the late 1960s questions were being raised about the American dream as the country confronted the ugly scars of systemic poverty and racism, and then the divisions over the Vietnam War.

The Catholic Church, forced to come to terms with the modern world, began doing so during the Second Vatican Council. It is no exaggeration to say that the results of this council were revolutionary in terms of the Catholic subculture in the United States. Almost overnight, it seemed, things that had been taken for granted as necessary to being a Catholic were jettisoned as nonessential. Catholics who had believed that eating meat on Friday was a mortal sin, meriting eternal punishment, suddenly found that

¹⁹ N. T. Wright argues forcefully that the culture of modernity which ruled the Western World from the time of the Industrial Revolution to recent times has brought on its own disintegration through arrogance (N. T. Wright, *The Challenge of Jesus: Rediscovering Who Jesus Was and Is* [Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1999]).

such abstinence was no longer required. The Latin liturgy, so long considered part of our way of life, vanished, with few, if any, explanations being offered. We who had taken for granted that celibacy was an inseparable adjunct to the priesthood now heard the discipline questioned and witnessed the laicization and marriage of many priests. Catholics who had for years frequented the sacrament of confession on a regular basis—indeed, many of them had felt that confession was required before each Communion—now were told that confession was not necessary unless one had committed a mortal sin; and, given the changes, such sins became rarer. With apparent ease many stopped going to confession. I believe that most of us had frequented the sacrament because we had bought into the culture, but we rarely enjoyed the experience. Once it was no longer required, we let the practice go with relief. Many received all these changes with open arms; but because these changes were not adequately explained, many others experienced an underlying anxiety. What was essential to being a Catholic? Many Catholics—priests, religious, and laypeople—felt adrift in a sea of relativity now that the certainties of the Catholic subculture were no more.

The Jesuit subculture suffered similar shocks. Within a few short years after Vatican II, novitiates and other houses of formation abandoned their rural surroundings; novices found themselves living in the heart of large cities, scholastics began studying with lay students at Jesuit universities, and theologates became part of ecumenical consortia. The habit, proper titles, classes, and examinations in Latin, a strict order of the day, large formation communities as total institutions—all vanished without a trace. Priests, scholastics, and brothers began to leave the Society in unprecedented numbers, and incoming novices became disconcertingly rare. Provinces and communities found themselves torn and divided as men tried to cope with all these changes, changes that amounted to a breakdown of our subculture. I am not at all sure that we have adequately dealt with the traumata of those years after Vatican II and General Congregations 31 and 32; perhaps we have not adequately grieved the losses of those years.

My Experience of This Turmoil

With the collapse of the cultural underpinnings, we stood in danger of losing our identity. What did it mean to be an American, a Roman Catholic, and a Jesuit? We had to draw these answers from the new situation. The culture and the subcultures did not automatically supply the answers any more. How did we, or at least how did I, make it through?

Tertianship

I made tertianship with about thirty other Jesuits in 1963-64. The structure of tertianship, including the thirty-day retreat, resembled very closely that of the novitiate. However, there were differences. For one thing, we raised questions about customs and traditions and were not satisfied with familiar answers that did not make sense. In addition, we talked with one another more openly about our experiences, although not yet about our experience in prayer. Because of the companionship and because of some significant experiences in prayer, I look back on that year with fondness and gratitude.

Graduate Studies

In 1964 I began doctoral studies in clinical psychology at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and remained there until 1969. Those were pivotal years for the country, the Church, and the Society. The country witnessed the civil-rights marches, the Vietnam War protests, the assassinations of Martin Luther King and of Bobby Kennedy. In the Church, the English Mass and concelebration were introduced, during which the priest faced the people. In the Society we experienced the changes mentioned earlier. It was a time of great ferment.

Community The Jesuits and other religious studying at the university lived in rooming houses. Community life was not a given, but had to be chosen. During my years in Ann Arbor, there were usually at least a dozen Jesuits on campus. It became a custom for us to have dinner together once a week at a local restaurant. After my first year, four of us rented a house and began a small community. Soon we had learned that we could cook dinner with some competence and enjoyed doing so. Our house became something of a central Jesuit gathering place for special occasions. Three of us remained as the nucleus of that community for the rest of my time in Ann Arbor, and the community continued when the three of us moved on. It is to be noted, however, that not all the Jesuits in Ann Arbor greeted the formation of this community eagerly. One Jesuit—only half facetiously—began to refer to our house as Ledóchowski Hall, a reference to a former superior general known for austerity. I believe that there was some fear that our house might lead to a formal Jesuit community with a superior.

Liturgy and Prayer When concelebrated Mass in English was allowed, a few of us began to concelebrate at 5:00 P.M. from Monday to Friday at the local Catholic hospital chapel. This liturgy became the preferred daily liturgy for many of the religious and laity in the area who were studying at the university, and the center of my daily life. In

addition, on Saturday evenings a number of religious, men and women alike, gathered in an apartment for Mass and a potluck supper. The desire for daily Mass remained strong in me and in other Jesuits and religious in Ann Arbor even now when there was no regular order of the day and no external pressure to continue the practice.

Although we had not been encouraged to speak with others of our experiences in prayer during the years of our formation, this reticence does not signify that we did not have such experiences, although I cannot speak for anyone except myself. I can say that at least by the time I had reached tertianship, the idea of prayer as a personal relationship had taken some root in me. Indeed, during the Spiritual Exercises of that year, I remember telling Jesus that I loved him and realizing that I meant it. This was a momentous event in my life, even if I was not able to tell anyone else about it. Yet I have to say that this notion of a personal relationship did not lead me to a growing transparency with Jesus at the time. However, my expression of love for Jesus did stand me in good stead during the tumultuous years in Ann Arbor and after when other loves competed for that love. But I did keep up a regular regimen of prayer in spite of the absence of a structure that fostered such a regimen.

Falling in Love In retrospect, it is not surprising that the loss of so many cultural supports for Jesuit life led to emotional upheavals in men who had for years been insulated from the outside world and from close relationships with women, and who had even been discouraged from developing close, intimate friendships with brother Jesuits. I had been in love as a teenager and in college. But I was not prepared for the resurgence of emotions when I fell in love in Ann Arbor. A section of a novel by Gail Godwin provides an apt description of what happened to me. Alice Henry, wife of Hugo Henry, has fallen in love with Francis Lake, a widower. Alice, her husband, and Francis are on an alumni donor tour. Alice muses on her emotional turmoil.

All those years I secretly felt superior because I never made a fool of myself in love. That's because I was never in love, but I had to fall in love before I could understand I'd never been in love before. And now I'm no different from Amanda Fritchie, only she was fifteen at the time and I'll be thirty-five my next birthday.

Surely you'd expect, though, if you'd been cool and controlled enough as an adolescent to sit on the sidelines of the jerky, mortifying dance of young love, that when you came up against middle-aged love, it would be conducted by your emotions in patient, dignified middle-aged fashion.

But it didn't work that way. Apparently you had to go through the beginner's mess at whatever age you began. You didn't earn any interest or exemptions just because you'd managed not to lose your heart till you were



almost thirty-five. If I'd waited to learn to *read* until I was almost thirty-five, thought Alice, dejected by her own analogy, I would have had to start where every first grader starts: sounding out the letters with my mouth, despairing yet aching toward the glimpsed embrace of total meaning.²⁰

That is what it was like for me when I fell in love. I was in an emotional turmoil. Now I can look on the time as a natural result of the repression of the years of formation, but at the time it was both exhilarating and painful. As I mentioned above, I had not extended the notion of prayer as a personal relationship to include letting Jesus know of my inner turmoil. At best, I could confess my failings and ask for help. In addition, I had not learned how to talk with a spiritual director (or, for that matter, with a superior) about such experiences. In fact, I did not have a spiritual director. I was able to talk somewhat guardedly with a member of my community at the time, who was himself going through similar experiences.

Yet, in spite of the strength of my love, I never gave serious thought to leaving the Society. Of course, I felt the commitment of the perpetual vows I had made in 1952. In addition, two experiences of my life as a Jesuit kept coming back to me. One was my declaration of love to Jesus during tertianship. The other was a conversation among Jesuit graduate students at Fordham when I was a regent. The topic was celibacy and why we were celibate. I became more and more frustrated with the utilitarian arguments for celibacy, namely, that celibacy made us more available and facilitated our apostolates in other familiar ways. Finally, I blurted out something that I did not know was a conviction until I said it. It went something like this: "I'm a Jesuit because this is where God wants me to be and where God knows I will be happiest." I can still say nothing better. A number of the Jesuits and other religious who were my companions and friends in Ann Arbor fell in love and left religious life. I fell in love and did not leave religious life. I believed that I belonged in the Society of Jesus. I have never regretted that choice. I bring up this experience because it shows that our formation had not prepared us well for living our Jesuit vocation where it is supposed to be lived, namely, in the middle of the world.

A Compartmentalized Life At the University of Michigan, I received a very fine education in psychology and some excellent training as a clinical psychologist. When I finished my doctorate in 1968, I was asked to stay on in the department as a lecturer, staff psychologist, and researcher, and was given permission by my provincial to accept the position. I was known by my colleagues in the department as a Jesuit priest, but I wore lay clothes in my clinical work and later while

²⁰ Gail Godwin, *The Good Husband* (New York: Ballantine, 1994), 426.

teaching. As I look back now, I realize that I lived a highly compartmentalized life. On the one hand, I found the center of my life revolving around the daily liturgy and my community life, including my community with the other religious in Ann Arbor. On the other hand, I studied and worked as a clinical psychologist as though I were no different from my lay colleagues. As a Jesuit I could have said that God can be found in all things, but I did not make the connection to my life as a psychologist.

According to Ignatian spirituality, God is always active in the world, always drawing people into a relationship of intimacy and community. Yet it never occurred to me to expect that my colleagues in psychology would want to discuss religious issues or that my clients, who revealed many intimate details of their inner lives, would speak of experiences of God in psychotherapy. Not even two conversations with a Jewish professor trained in psychoanalysis in Europe made a difference in my practice. In one conversation he told me that many of his patients began to bring up religious matters in therapy sessions once he had come to terms with his own religious background. In another discussion he told me

*"I'm a Jesuit because this is where
God wants me to be and where God
knows I will be happiest."*

that religious issues often did not surface in psychotherapy because of the therapist's own resistance to dealing with religion. I agreed with him, but neither of these discussions had any effect on my practice of psychotherapy. None of my clients ever brought up religious issues. It was as though I myself had an unconscious bias against religion, at least in psychotherapy sessions. In my psyche, religion and counseling were neatly compartmentalized. The compartmentalization was like a hermetic seal that kept any mention of religion from seeping into the realm of counseling or psychotherapy.

Indeed, even when I left Ann Arbor and began to practice counseling and psychotherapy with Jesuits and others studying for the priesthood at Weston Jesuit School of Theology, none of them spoke of their religious experiences in sustained weekly and twice-weekly counseling sessions that touched on very intimate details of their lives. That is a measure of how far I was from living out my so-called belief that God can be found in all things. I was living in a compartmentalized world. Once again, I note how my upbringing as a Jesuit had not prepared me to give sufficient attention to a central dictum of Ignatian spirituality and to apply it to my work as a psychotherapist.

Recovering Ignatian Spirituality

This state of hermetic compartmentalization might have gone on for a long time had it not happened that in the fall of 1970 the New England Province began training sessions to give the Spiritual Exercises to individuals. During the first of these weekend training sessions, I realized that I could use the clinical skills I had learned at the University of Michigan to help people to talk of experiences of God. Not only that. I began to take my own experiences of God more seriously. As a result of these sessions, I made my first individually directed retreat in the spring of 1971 and began to direct retreats for individuals that summer. I also began to see a spiritual director regularly and to try to tell him, and later her, the truth about my life and experience.

For the first time, I began to take seriously the notion that Jesus is interested in my experience and to talk with him about some of the inner turmoil of being in love, not just to accuse myself of being less than perfect or a sinner but to let him know what was going on and to ask his help. Around this time my friend, who had left her religious congregation, told

me that she had met a man who was very attractive to her. I was deeply shaken. On the one hand, with my head I could acknowledge the rightness of this for her; on the other hand, my heart was torn. I found it hard to concentrate and had some sleepless nights. I talked with my spiritual director (he also happened to be my rector), who suggested that I pray for healing.

In the years since the late sixties, we Jesuits have recovered much from the Ignatian tradition.

With this suggestion in mind, I used the story of the two blind men in Matt. 9:27-31. When I read the words, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" I knew that I could be healed of my turmoil if I said yes, but I also became aware that I did not really want to be healed. To be healed, it seemed to my conflicted heart, meant to lose my friend. Of course, in reality the only way I could keep the friendship was to allow myself to be healed of the selfish side of my love. At the time, however, I could only ask Jesus to give me the desire to be healed. Which, in time, he did give me. As a result, I was healed and was able to preside a couple of years later at my friend's wedding and to become friends with her new family. I had learned, finally, how to engage in a personal relationship with Jesus that was honest, at least as honest as I could be at any time. In addition, I discovered that honesty was the best policy with my spiritual director and rector.

During that first training weekend on the directed retreat, a group of us began to talk about the possibility of starting a center for Ignatian spirituality, an idea that the province assembly had recommended to the provincial. Out of these conversations came the Center for Religious Development, which opened its doors in Cambridge, Mass., in 1971. Our mission, approved by the provincial, was to do research on Ignatian spiritual direction, to train spiritual directors, and to give spiritual direction. In our training program we used all the clinical skills we had learned through supervised training in other fields as well as a renewed understanding of Ignatian spirituality to help people to talk about religious experience, or what I later came to call the religious dimension of human experience.²¹ Among other products of our research was *The Practice of Spiritual Direction*, which has become one of the staples in training programs for spiritual directors and which has been translated into six languages.²² The hermetic seal that kept religious experiences insulated from other human experiences had been permanently broken.²³

In the years since the late sixties, we Jesuits have recovered much from the Ignatian tradition. The Center for Religious Development had a hand in these recoveries, and I often thank God that the center has been of such benefit. The main recovery, I believe, was not individual direction of the Spiritual Exercises, as important as that was for what followed. After all, one can direct an individual in much the same way that one directed hundreds, by giving points for each period of the day to the individual without much attention to what has happened during the previous twenty-four hours. I suspect that this has happened, especially in the early days.

The Fifteenth Introductory Explanation

What we have recovered is the meaning of the fifteenth annotation, found in the "Introductory Explanation" of the Exercises. In this annotation Ignatius writes that the director should not urge the person making the

²¹ See William A. Barry, *Spiritual Direction and the Encounter with God: A Theological Inquiry* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist, 1992).

²² William A. Barry and William J. Connolly, *The Practice of Spiritual Direction* (New York: Seabury, 1982; now published by Harper/Collins).

²³ In 1999 I was invited to give a lecture as part of the celebration of seventy-five years of Catholic chaplaincy at the University of Michigan. I chose as my title "How Freudian Theory and Practice and Religion, Finally, Kissed and Made Up in One Man's Practice." I spoke of the compartmentalization of my life and its demise. The next day I was invited to a seminar of graduate students in clinical psychology to discuss religion and psychology.

Exercises toward one decision or another. In other circumstances the director could give advice and even urge a person to make a certain decision. "But," he writes,

during these Spiritual Exercises when a person is seeking God's will, it is more appropriate and far better that the Creator and Lord himself should communicate himself to the devout soul, embracing it in love and praise, and disposing it for the way which will enable the soul to serve him better in the future. Accordingly, the one giving the Exercises ought not to lean or incline in either direction but rather, while standing by like the pointer of a scale in equilibrium, to allow the Creator to deal immediately with the creature and the creature with its Creator and Lord. (no. 15)

Ignatius believed that, at least while a person was making the Spiritual Exercises, God would deal directly with him or her. In other words, Ignatius believed that God was actively interested in the person who took the time to make these Exercises. We have recovered the Ignatian conviction that God communicates directly to the individual who makes the Exercises.

Let us not underestimate the importance of this recovery. It was precisely this annotation that caused controversy not only in the early years but even after the founding of the Society. Ignatius was accused of being tainted with the heresy of the "alumbrados" because he assumed that God would communicate directly with the person making the Exercises, and also having fallen into the heresy of the Lutherans because he forbade the director from advocating the vowed life of poverty, chastity, and obedience during the Exercises.²⁴

Before the recovery of the meaning of this introductory explanation, most of us, I believe, operated with a similar suspicion of "individual inspiration." We depended much more on external signs and on blind obedience to authority. To give one example, my friend from Holy Cross, whose application to the Society motivated me to apply and who entered with me on the same day, suffered from severe migraine headaches, almost from the beginning of his time in the novitiate. He wanted to leave the novitiate and later the Society, but was repeatedly told that he had all the external signs of a vocation. While I was in Germany studying philosophy, I learned all this from a letter he wrote me telling of his decision to leave the Society. He revealed that he had almost come to hate God for forcing him to remain a Jesuit. Only now, some six or seven years after his entrance, had he met a wise Jesuit who helped him to decide that God was not asking him to bear this terrible burden.

²⁴ See John W. O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 43f.

The Variety of Prayer Forms

We also recovered the riches of the prayer forms contained in the Spiritual Exercises. Meditation was only one of these forms. What was especially helpful to me was the discovery that the kind of imaginative contemplation recommended in the Exercises did not require a pictorial imagination. If I could read the Gospels and feel for the characters and let these characters take on a life for me, even if I could not picture them, then I was contemplating in the Ignatian way. God communicates to each of us according to our own imaginations and our own past histories. Prayer became much more like a personal relationship in which there was “give and take” between the Lord and me. In fact, it became clear to me and others that God desires a personal relationship with every human being, desires to draw us into his own inner Trinitarian life. Prayer lost its utilitarian purpose. If prayer is a personal relationship, I pray because I want to relate to the Lord, not in order to become a better person or to save the world. Of course, if I do engage honestly in this relationship, I will become a better person and will become a coworker with the Lord in this world.

Adaptation to the Individual

With this step we were able to recover another aspect of Ignatian spirituality, namely, the need to take individuals as they are, not as we (and they) wish they were. When I had contemplated the healing of the two blind men of Matt. 9:27-31, I thought that I desired to be healed. I found out that I could not, at that time, honestly say that I desired healing. I could only desire the desire. If prayer is a personal relationship, then each such relationship will be different because each person is unique.

In the early 1970s, during a workshop on giving the Spiritual Exercises, we were presented with a fictitious case that turned out to be based on the life of Blessed Pierre Favre, one of Ignatius’s first companions in Paris. Pierre was a man beset by scruples and depressive tendencies when Ignatius first met him. He waited four years before giving Pierre the full Spiritual Exercises. Ignatius had to work hard with Pierre to help him develop an image of God more in keeping with reality. Developing such an internal image of God-and-self in relation cannot be done purely through instruction in theology; it has to come through experience. In other words, Ignatius seems to have worked with Pierre over that period of years to help him experience God as a loving creator rather than a frightening ogre. Thus Ignatius acted as a spiritual director or pastoral counselor, enabling Pierre to have a foundational experience of God as the One who creates the universe

and Pierre out of love, in order to invite him into a relationship of intimacy with God. The case study based on Pierre helped us reflect on the criteria for readiness to make the full Spiritual Exercises and on the means to assist people like Pierre to become ready. Thus, as we realized how different people were in their interior attitudes to God, we began to tailor the Exercises to their needs, as Ignatius must have done with Pierre. This demonstrates most convincingly why it is important to work closely with individuals.

The Role of Desires

This discovery led us to pay more careful attention to what retreatants really desire. That is, we began to take seriously what “*id quod volo*” means. I now regularly ask, “What do you want?” before suggesting any material for prayer. I presume that honest desires are what Ignatius intends when he advises retreatants to ask for what they want during the second or

third prelude to each period of prayer. When directors engage in a conversation with retreatants, they have a chance to find out what retreatants really want. In fact, such directors have a chance to help retreatants find out what they really want, as the conversation with my spiritual director helped me realize that I did not desire healing, but, at best, desired to desire to be healed. Before his foundational experience of God’s love for him, warts and

We pay attention to the real desires of retreatants and help them to be honest with the Lord about what they want.

all, Pierre Favre could hardly have wanted a close relationship with a God who seemed to be plaguing him for his sins. When we deal with individuals in spiritual direction or in an Ignatian retreat, we help them become aware of the ambivalence and multivalence of their desires. One may want to know Jesus better, but one may also be afraid of the consequences of that closeness.

Recently, at a Newman Club on the campus of a large state university, I gave a talk on prayer as a personal relationship. At the end of the talk, a social-science professor was bold enough to say that he desired a closer relationship with God, but avoided it because he knew that God would ask him to do something that he did not want to do. In a moment of inspiration I said, “Why don’t you tell God that you don’t want to do it?” His reply was an incredulous, “Can I do that?” My response: “It’s a relationship, isn’t it? Relationships only develop when we can be honest with the other person about our desires.”

We pay attention to the real desires of retreatants and help them to be honest with the Lord about what they want. The assumption, of course, is that God's own desire for a personal relationship awakens in each of us a correlative desire. As Sebastian Moore writes, "God's creative desire, which brings us into and keeps us in existence, creates in us a desire for 'we know not what.'"²⁵ Thus, in the recovery of the importance and the meaning of the "id quod volo," we discovered that Ignatian spirituality presumes that in each person there is an inborn desire for closeness to God, which seems to run counter to what books such as Leen's *Progress through Mental Prayer* of my formation days seem to assume. The task of pastoral care is to help people become fully aware of this deepest desire of their hearts. True enough, our hearts are ambivalent, but they are not by nature totally alienated from spirituality. Moreover, we can now comprehend the source of the energy of the early Jesuits and the enthusiasm they engendered in so many. They believed that everyone was being attracted by God. "The Jesuits . . . expected the manifestation of God's presence within the soul to be accessible, in some degree, to all human beings. According to the Constitutions, the Jesuit minister was himself nothing more than 'an instrument' united with God, in God's hand."²⁶ There is an optimism in Ignatian spirituality that was not so evident in my early training.

The Discernment of Spirits

Concomitant with the recovery of the self-communication of God while making of the Spiritual Exercises, we have recovered the importance of the discernment of spirits. When external criteria are the predominant means of making decisions and no one expects God to communicate directly to ordinary people, there is no need of discernment of movements of the heart. At most, as we learned in the course on spiritual and mystical theology, discernment of spirits was to be used, by experts, of course, in cases of people who were far along the mystical path. But if God is communicating directly to people, they are immediately faced with having to determine which experiences are God's communication. As soon as people begin to pay attention to their experiences in prayer, they realize that they have a kaleidoscope of inner reactions. We have come to realize that Ignatius had such

²⁵ See Sebastian Moore, *Let This Mind Be in You: The Quest for Identity through Oedipus to Christ* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985). The desire for "we know not what" is given the name "Joy" by C. S. Lewis in his autobiographical memoir, *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1955). In this book Lewis shows that this desire is for God.

²⁶ O'Malley, *First Jesuits*, 83f.

experiences in mind when he formulated the rules for discernment for the First and Second Weeks of the Exercises. Gradually we came to understand that these rules apply to our ordinary experiences when we take seriously the presupposition of the Exercises, namely, that God wants a personal relationship with us.

The Account of Conscience

With these recoveries of the tradition, we were well on the road to recovering the tensions inherent in Jesuit spirituality. The account of conscience once again took on significance. Superiors wanted to know the interior lives of their men not only to help them with their own spiritual lives but also to decide what would be appropriate apostolic assignments for them. Superiors wanted to know their subjects' attitudes toward various possible assignments and their experiences during prayer. This was a heady experience for most Jesuits, but one that discomfited some who believed that the older style of governance defined Jesuit obedience. One heard laments such as, "The provincial asked me what I wanted to do. Why doesn't he just tell me what to do? That's what Jesuit obedience is all about." Given the training we received in Jesuit obedience, such a reaction is understandable. However, in our present circumstances it is relatively unheard of that someone finds himself assigned to a work without any prior conversation about that assignment. We have recovered something of the Ignatian vision of the ideal account of conscience.

In the "General Examen" Ignatius explains to postulants why the account of conscience is so important in the Society. Jesuits, Ignatius writes, must be ready to travel to any part of the world if missioned; furthermore, he writes,

to proceed without error in such missions, or in sending some persons and not others, or some for one task and others for different ones, it is not only highly but even supremely important that the superior have complete knowledge of the inclinations and motions of those who are in his charge, and to what defects or sins they have been or are more moved and inclined, so that thus he may direct them better, without placing them beyond the measure of their capacity in dangers or labors greater than they could in our Lord endure with a spirit of love; and also so that the superior, while keeping to himself what he learns in secret, may be better able to organize and arrange what is expedient for the whole body of the Society.²⁷

²⁷ *Constitutions*, no. 92 (p. 43).

In other words, because our apostolic activity can take us into difficult and dangerous places and because we are so different in our personalities and psychic and spiritual maturity, superiors need to know their men in depth in order to make good assignments.

I thank God that I learned to trust superiors with my inner life. As my episode of being deeply in love was drawing to an end, I had occasion to speak with my provincial about my inner life; and this conversation helped him to make a decision about me that was definitely beneficial both for me and for the Society and the apostolate. If we had not had that conversation, he might have given me an assignment that could have been harmful to all concerned.

For good or ill, we are immersed in a multicultural and interconnected world.

Where the account of conscience works well, the Society is not only governed well but individuals and the apostolic work prosper. In the course of the recovery of the account of conscience, by the way, we have also discovered how important Ignatius's directives on the quality of lovableness in superiors are. We more easily entrust ourselves to men whom we perceive as genuine human beings.

Turning Forward with Love

With the recovery of these traditional marks of Jesuit spirituality, we are in a good position to face the unknown future and to assist our Church and world to do the same. The tensions of our spirituality seem to be tailor-made for our present predicament if we have the faith and trust and nerve to live our spirituality authentically. We take to heart the second part of Horn Chips's advice to Crazy Horse:

"I think we will not see the new way," Horn Chips said. "I think it will not become visible for seven generations. In that time the hoop of the people will seem to be broken, and the flowering tree will seem to be withered. But after seven generations some will see with the single eye that is the heart, and the new way will appear. . . ."

"The old way is beautiful. We turn backward to it and in taking leave we offer it our love. Then we turn forward and walk forth blindly, offering our love. Yes, blindly."

The cultures my contemporaries and I grew up in are irretrievably gone. The tendency to isolation from surrounding cultures that marked the United

States, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Society of Jesus in my early years is no more. For good or ill, we are immersed in a multicultural and interconnected world. Events in Saudi Arabia or Tokyo or Rio de Janeiro are now felt in the pocketbooks of ordinary citizens of the United States. The Second Vatican Council was the first truly global ecumenical council of the Catholic Church, and more and more people experience the universality of the Church at the local level. It has been noted that the Society's general congregations have also become global only since Vatican II. In this new world situation, it is not yet clear what political, economic, and even religious institutions and structures are best suited to meet the challenges that face us. Our spirituality, I believe, can help not only us but also many others in the search for the new way that is needed in our time.

On a few occasions when I was provincial, I told members of the province that we are now in a situation where our "alleged trust in God" is being put to the test.²⁸ When I entered the Society, "belief" was relatively easy. The Church and the Society were growing at an unprecedented rate. Novitiates and seminaries were teeming and new ones were being built. Catholic churches and schools, both colleges and universities, were booming. We could have been putting our trust in these institutions rather than in God. In the aftermath of the cultural revolutions of the past thirty-five years, all this has changed. Now we do have a chance to put our alleged trust in God to the test. The recovery of our spirituality has come at a providential time.

Let me state my own answers to the five worldview questions with the hope that they may express our best stance as we move into the new century with trust that we are called by God to be part of his solution to the crisis of our times. Who are we? We are Roman Catholic companions of Jesus. Where are we? We are in God's world, the whole of it our home. What's the problem? Our cultural maps no longer are accurate; we are beset by conflicts in our world, our country, our Church, and our own Society. What's the solution? Our spirituality is a privileged means of finding the way of the risen Jesus for our time. What time is it? A time of crisis for our world.

We often read and hear that we are in a postmodern era. Modernity, the world that sustained the European and North American way of life since the Industrial Revolution, has run its course. We are faced with a

²⁸ I quote this from something I read in Carl Jung's writings years ago, but I cannot trace its source.

thoroughly new situation. Postmodernity is in the process of replacing modernity, with devastating effects on our understanding of knowledge and truth, the self, and the story we tell ourselves.²⁹

Knowledge and Truth Whereas modernity believed we could know the world objectively, postmodernity has denied that there is such a thing as objective knowledge; all knowledge, all values, are glimpsed through the biased point of view of the knower. Virtual reality symbolizes for us that everyone creates his own private world.

The Self Modernity took pride in the self-made individual, the person as master of his or her fate. Postmodernity sees the "I" as "just a floating signifier, a temporary and accidental collocation of conflicting forces and impulses" (151f.).

The Story We Tell Ourselves Modernity's overarching story (its metanarrative) was the myth of indefinite progress. In this story the industrial revolution was the aim of evolution, the time of prosperity for all people. This

overarching story . . . has now been conclusively shown to be an oppressive, imperialist and self-serving story; it has brought untold misery to millions in the industrialized West and to billions in the rest of the world, where cheap labor and raw materials have been ruthlessly exploited. It is a story that serves the interests of the Western world. Postmodernity has claimed . . . that *all* metanarratives are suspect; they are all power games. (152)

Let us make no mistake: we Christians and Jesuits of the Western World bought heavily into this overarching story with its arrogant assumption of superiority over other cultures.

We who stand in the Judeo-Christian tradition are in a good position to read the signs of our times. The prophets told Israel that the cataclysmic events of the destruction of the Temple and the exile to Babylon were God's judgment on Israel's infidelity to the Covenant. So too, we can see the cultural revolutions of our time as God's judgment on our infidelity as Christians of the Western World to the New Covenant. But it is not a judgment that comes from without, through a new divine intervention into our history; rather it is a judgment from within. The seeds of the destruction of modernity were planted when our forebears, who believed, correctly perhaps, that they were God's chosen instruments for the salvation of the world, got the means wrong and proceeded to live out this vocation by

²⁹ For these ideas and those that follow I am indebted to N. T. Wright, *The Challenge of Jesus: Rediscovering Who Jesus Was and Is* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1999).

using their superior technology and weaponry to subdue “inferior cultures.” The seeds were sown when Christians followed the conquering armies and proceeded to Christianize the world by making the new Christians into copies of European and American Christians. The seeds were sown, in other words, when Western Christians forgot the story of God introduced into the world by Jesus, the story of a self-emptying God whose only weapon was self-sacrificing love and whose symbol is the cross.

Given this cultural revolution, what are we to do? We could, as did the Israelites in the desert, hanker for the leeks and onions of Egypt, that is, for “the good old days.” We could, on the other hand, embrace wholeheartedly the tenets of postmodernity as the Israelites embraced the gods of their neighbors in the time of the Judges (see Judg. 2:11-13). Both attitudes are present among us and, perhaps, in each of us. Let me explain the latter remark. I have sensed in myself the kind of anxiety about lost certitudes that

We do not have to be rendered timid by the post-modern critique that makes everything relative.

could lead to a desire to turn the clock back. I have also sensed in myself the kind of doubts about the truth of any belief that could lead to the skepticism and cynicism that seem to pervade postmodern thought. These inner states are, I believe, to be expected in a time of cultural upheaval. However, neither nostalgia nor cultural idolatry helped the Israelites, and they will not help us and lead us forward.

We are a people who believe that with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, God has definitively entered this world and is working out its salvation. We need to trust that revelation and walk forward with love, even if blindly. God’s Spirit is in the world, yearning to lead us forward to the promised land.

I believe that the recovery of an authentic Jesuit spirituality is providential. Our spirituality brims with optimism because it believes that God is ingredient in this world after the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and the outpouring of God’s Spirit. It believes that this Spirit is operative in the hearts of men and women. At the same time, the optimism it fosters is not naive: it lives in tension with the knowledge that we can be deceived and can deceive ourselves. Ignatius urged his followers to use all the human means their ingenuity and intelligence could provide in order to become discerning, a process that in our day means also to be philosophically and historically critical. We do not have to be rendered timid by the postmodern critique that makes everything relative. Even those who are not naively

uncritical thinkers can embrace Christianity's story, its metanarrative.³⁰ Discernment is necessary, and in our spirituality we have the tools for such discernment. The discernment of spirits will help discipline our hearts, so that we can see with the single eye which is the heart.³¹ In addition, Ignatian spirituality avoids naiveté by taking seriously the existence of the "enemy of human nature," the evil spirit who tries to draw us away from God's designs. Both modernity and postmodernity tend to downplay his existence. Here again we find that a healthy Jesuit spirituality is tensive; it can hold in tension both great optimism and a healthy dose of realism, avoiding naiveté on the one hand and excessive skepticism on the other.

Here on Earth, where the great world religions lie along the fault lines that threaten world order, intercultural and interreligious dialogue is desperately needed.³² The recovery of our spirituality comes to our aid here. Just as we have recovered the apostolate of conversation, which is the individual direction of people through the Spiritual Exercises and through spiritual direction, we can, as did the early Jesuits, expand this apostolate and engage many more people in dialogue about their experiences. John O'Malley remarks on the ubiquity of the phrase "helping souls" in the writings of the early Jesuits.

By "souls" Jesuits meant the whole person. Thus they could help souls in a number of ways, for instance, by providing food for the body or learning for the mind. That is why their list of ministries was so long, why at first glance it seems to be without limits. No doubt, however, the Jesuits primarily wanted to help the person achieve an ever better relationship with God. They sought to be mediators of an immediate experience of God that would lead to an inner change of heart or a deepening of religious sensibilities already present. With varying degrees of clarity, that purpose shines through all they wrote and said as the ultimate goal they had in mind when they spoke of helping souls.³³

Jesuits developed the art of spiritual conversation as one of their *consueta ministeria*, their ordinary ministries. We might develop this art for our day, trusting that God is in some way touching the lives of everyone we meet if

³⁰ For an example of such critical thinking, see N. T. Wright, *Christian Origins and the Question of God: vol. 1, The New Testament and the People of God; vol. 2, Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992, 1996).

³¹ In *Spiritual Direction and the Encounter with God: A Theological Inquiry* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist, 1992), chap. 6, I have argued that the tools of Ignatian discernment are made to order for our modern situation.

³² See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Touchstone Books, 1997).

³³ O'Malley, *First Jesuits*, 18f.

only he or she would pay attention. In a word, our spirituality asks us to trust our own experience of God's saving and life-giving activity and to expect that others have similar or analogous experiences. Conversation about such experiences can lead to the development of deep friendships and open both parties in the dialogue to a deeper and richer grasp of the Mystery we call God. In addition, talking about such experiences can bridge the chasm that seems to yawn between people of different religions.³⁴

Insofar as we have allowed the dynamic of the Spiritual Exercises to touch our hearts, we have experienced God in dark periods as well as in happy moments, have experienced the darkness of sin and confusion and have there found God bringing light and direction, have come to know and love Jesus and to desire to be with him on mission, have grieved and agonized with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane and at Golgotha, have experienced our "hearts burning" as we encountered Jesus risen. Our spirituality invites us to expect that other Christians can and do have similar experiences and to converse with them to discover more of what God is doing right now to show the Church the new way. As Jesuits, we are men who love and respect the Church but who are adults in this Church. Because of the tensive nature of our spirituality we not only expect God to speak through the hierarchical Church but also through the experience of all the people of God. I believe that our spirituality is God's gift to the Church and to the world of our day, just as it was in Ignatius's turbulent times. Those times, too, experienced a cultural revolution, and the people of God discovered in Ignatian spirituality significant help to find the new way God was disclosing. So in our day, I believe, this same tensive spirituality can help the Church to discern the new way. That is, to use Horn Chips's words, our spirituality can and does help people to "see with the single eye that is the heart."³⁵

Near the end of *The Challenge of Jesus*, N. T. Wright invites his readers into what I would call a contemplative reading of the story of Jesus' appearance to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. He sets the scene by reminding the reader of Israel's overarching story, as expressed in Psalms 42 and 43 read as a unit. Here, the psalmist remembers the joys of experiencing God in the Temple now that he is far from the Temple and beset by

³⁴ GC 34 has urged all Jesuits to engage in such intercultural and interreligious dialogue. For an example of such dialogue, see Francis Clooney, "In Ten Thousand Places, in Every Blade of Grass," *STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS* 28, no. 3 (May 1996).

³⁵ See William A. Barry, "Discernment and Obedience: Finding God's Will and Staying Roman Catholic," in *God's Passionate Desire and Our Response* (Notre Dame, Ind.: Ave Maria Press, 1993), 129-34.

enemies. He cries out in agony that he and Israel have been bereft of God's Presence. Yet he still has hope, because of what God has done in the past to save Israel. As a result he can pray with heartfelt emotion: "O send out your light and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy; and I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God" (Ps. 43:3f.).

In Jesus' day this psalm would have expressed the hope of the Israelites that God would come, and come soon, to deliver them from their enemies. The story Israel told itself expressed this hope, but that story included within itself the coming of God and the Messiah as successful warriors who would lead the people to an armed victory over their enemies and thus bring peace to the

world. The two disciples on the road to Emmaus had hoped that Jesus was this Messiah, but instead he had been crucified, as had every other would-be Messiah of the time, and thus had proved to be a

As Jesuits, we are men who love and respect the Church but who are adults in this Church.

false Messiah. "We had hoped . . ." As they walk along in desolation, they are joined by a stranger who retells the story of Israel in such a way that the very thing that seemed to have been the defeat of Israel's hopes is the victory of God. Wright invites his readers to interpret this story in our present context with the shipwreck of our hopes staring us in the face. In this world where the story of inevitable progress through the ingenuity of human beings seems to have reached a dead end, we are asked to allow the risen Jesus to meet us as the stranger who will set our hearts on fire. With this contemplative reading of the Emmaus story, Wright acts like an Ignatian director. Again we can see how our spirituality is a gift for this time of crisis and of challenge.

As I end this essay, I invite readers to make this contemplation of the Emmaus story. Many of us have experienced the loss of the Society we entered, because the culture that supported so many of its traditions and customs collapsed. In addition, we have experienced the loss of the Catholic Church that we knew, again because the culture that supported so many of its traditions and customs collapsed. We have also suffered the loss of the United States we knew, again because the culture that supported its traditions collapsed. As we allow these losses to enter our hearts and minds and imaginations, we might feel something akin to what the two disciples on the road to Emmaus felt. "We had hoped . . ." Many of our fellow wayfarers

feel lost in this new world. Some are angry and feel betrayed by the changes they encountered. Some are angry that more changes have not occurred in our country, our Church, and in the Society of Jesus. All of us are confused and are hoping to find our way. We can identify with all we meet. And we can offer our gifts, the heritage of our spirituality and our trust and hope in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God's Spirit will show us the way.

"[S]ome will see with the single eye that is the heart, and the new way will appear."

He looked directly at Crazy Horse. "The old way is beautiful. We turn backward to it and in taking leave we offer it our love. Then we turn forward and walk forth blindly, offering our love. Yes, blindly."



SOURCES

The Maturing of Our Minds in Christ

The Society of St. John the Evangelist (S.S.J.E.), sometimes popularly called the "Cowley Fathers," from Cowley near Oxford, where the order was founded in 1865 by the Reverend Richard Meux Benson, is the oldest religious order of men within the Anglican Communion. Over a period of eight years, the members of the American congregation of the Society in a process of religious discernment created a new and contemporary version of its rule and formally adopted it in 1996. The passage printed here is the whole of chapter 41 of that rule, "The Maturing of Our Minds in Christ." It may prove a thought-provoking and fruitful experience to read a brief portion of the rule of a religious congregation of another Christian church. This is especially true in the light of the elaboration of our own "revised legislation particular to the Society of Jesus as a religious order in the Church" in the annotated Constitutions and the Complementary Norms. In addition, there have been personal ties of friendship and mutual support between some members of the Society of Jesus at Weston School of Theology in Cambridge and some members of the Society of St. John the Evangelist at their house, also in Cambridge, a few blocks from Weston.

JWP SJ

Our pursuit of knowledge is an expression of love for God's world and the riches of revelation. As we bring our gifts of imagination and intellect to maturity we are able to glorify God more and more. Since our gifts and ministries vary we need to encourage one another to value not only reading and study but many other ways of learning, every method that helps us become more responsive in heart and mind to the whole creation. As our faith matures we come to recognize Christ's hidden presence everywhere: "All things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together."

We cannot fulfill our mission without a lifelong engagement with the riches of Scripture and the Christian tradi-

tion. We need therefore to encourage and train one another to explore this great tradition firsthand. It is important to absorb classics of Christian spirituality and theology, and valuable for each of us to develop a personal interest in certain schools, periods, or figures to which we might be specially drawn. We need knowledge of other faiths, and a sound grasp of religious history to which good biographies have given richness and color.

The Spirit calls us to be alert and open to our own time. Some of us will be drawn to contemporary explorations of theology and spirituality and engage in studies that throw light on the changes now taking place in the world. Our aim is to maintain a lively, critical interest in the cultures in which we are situ-

ated, and seek to expand our perspectives globally so that we can empathize with other societies and religious traditions.

All our ministries, whether of preaching, teaching, or personal encounter in the Spirit, call for a penetrating understanding of the mysteries of the heart and human relationships. For this we need many resources. Psychology and the human sciences are sources of insight, and some of us will find in literature, philosophy, drama, film, music, dance, and the visual arts springs of vital truth if we approach them keenly in the Spirit.

We commit ourselves to maintaining ample libraries in each house as well as devoting funds for further education and the enrichment of the imagination. The community is to hold regular events of corporate education so that our learning can be a shared experience. Individual commitment to learning in a disciplined way is equally essential. Study does not have the same attraction for all of us, and even those who enjoy it find that the pressure of other respon-

sibilities distracts them. Unless we grasp the truth that it is both a labor of love and a spiritual discipline, we are likely to neglect study. We should therefore support one another in regularly setting aside time for reading, and encourage one another to take advantage of opportunities for training, enrichment, and further education. Our sense of common endeavor will be stimulated when we discuss with one another what we are learning and take a mutual interest in our discoveries. Our goal is to arrive at the maturity which enables us to plan our study so that it can be focused, regular, and supported. We shall not often be able to reserve time for study every day, but each week should include it.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

I recently read Lisa Fullam's article "Juana S.J.: The Past (and Future?) Status of Women in the Society of Jesus" (STUDIES 31, no. 5). I was amazed at Fr. James Swetnam's response to the article that appeared as one of the Letters to the Editor in the subsequent issue of STUDIES (32, no. 1). Both the content and the tone of the letter are questionable.

While it is the case that Fr. Swetnam begins with saying that he is simply stating an opinion, Ms. Fullam's article deserves a more reasoned response than an opinion. She has written a serious piece of historical theology and has drawn some conclusions from her study of two events in the history of the Society of Jesus. The historical reasoning in the piece is careful and amply illustrates the difference between the Roser case and the Juana case. It is entirely possible for one to disagree with the conclusions she draws from her historical study, but then she deserves more than the throw-away line in Fr. Swetnam's letter stating, "Helping women to be Themselves by having them become Ours is radical but ill advised." One needs just as much counterargumentation to establish this claim as Ms. Fullam did to establish her own claims and conclusions.

The second content issue has to do with Fr. Swetnam's plea for "rehabilitating the word 'obedience' for our individual and communal search for knowing and doing God's will." In order to have obedience, one must have one who obeys and one who commands. Fr. Swetnam makes a general accusation that someone is disobedient to someone who commands. One needs to identify the parties who command and disobey. Without this identification, no person or group of persons could possibly respond to the accusation.

Finally, the tone of the letter as a whole is dismissive of too many people. Ms. Fullam is dismissed as someone who simply seeks to be herself. People who disagree with Fr. Swetnam are dismissed as disobedient. In the Society of Jesus we have procedures and documents that help us deal with controversial and important issues. These procedures need to be invoked to discuss matters such as the relationship of women to the Society of Jesus and obedience in the Society. Vague condemnation is not sufficient when one deals with important matters.

John L. Treloar, S.J.

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